

ENG 2360

American Literature Since 1865

Instructor Information

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Scope & Nature of the Course

English 2360 is a survey of representative authors and works of American literature from the Civil War to the present. Obviously, we can't study all of American literature; we will necessarily leave out many important works. We will, however, study all the three major genres (poetry, drama, and fiction). In this correspondence course, we will begin with poems, then study two dramas, then move to short stories (the only truly American genre), and finish with two complete novels.

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Content Outline

Lesson 1: Reading and Analyzing Poetry I

Lesson 1 explains the characteristics of poetry. You will read and answer questions over several poems by American poets.

Lesson 2: Reading and Analyzing Poetry II

You will read and answer questions over several poems by American poets.

Lesson 3: Reading and Analyzing Poetry III

You will read and answer questions over several poems by American poets.

Lesson 4: Reading and Analyzing Poetry IV

You will read and answer questions over several poems by American poets.

Lesson 5: Reading and Analyzing Drama I

Lesson 5 includes a brief explanation of the differences between drama and other types of fiction. For this lesson, you will read the play A Streetcar Named Desire and answer questions about it.

Lesson 6: Reading and Analyzing Drama II

For this lesson, you will read the play Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf and answer questions about it.

Lesson 7: Reading and Analyzing Short Fiction I

Lesson 7 explains the characteristics of short stories. You will read and analyze a selection of short stories.

Lesson 8: Reading and Analyzing Short Fiction II

You will read and analyze a selection of short stories.

Lesson 9: Reading and Analyzing Novels I

*This lesson involves reading *The Great Gatsby* and answering questions about the novel.*

Lesson 10: Reading and Analyzing Novels II

*This lesson involves reading *The House on Mango Street* and answering questions about the novel.*

Lesson 11: The Final Exam

Course Goals

After you have completed this course, you should have acquired the following:

- a general knowledge about literature, which will give you the facility to ask increasingly sophisticated questions of literary texts;
- the basic tools of textual analysis, teaching you to read literature closely with attention to form, syntax, and language;
- a heightened awareness of literature as art and its capacity to order experience in aesthetically pleasing and moving ways; and
- an understanding of literary works in context—historical, social, cultural—through the exploration of particular works as a record of human experience and as part of a definable tradition.

I hope you will have a renewed appreciation for the works of the authors you study. And, I hope you enjoy the reading.

Required Materials

We have no one text for this class; rather, you'll use the individual works. You may use any edition of the books (though be aware that editions of *The Norton Anthology of American Literature, Shorter Edition* other than the 7th edition might be missing one or more of the assigned works of literature; it is likely, though, that you could find the missing material online).

- Albee, Edward, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*.
- Baym, Nina, Editor. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature, Shorter 7th Edition, Volume 2*.
- Cisneros, Sandra. *The House on Mango Street*.
- Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby*.

Note: I will expect you to document your essays for this course (not the short answer-type questions) using the current MLA form of documentation. You can find guidelines to the MLA format online at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/> or many other websites.

Course Procedure

This course will consist of ten lessons and a final exam. You may access the lessons by clicking on "Course Content" in the left menu. Each lesson includes the following elements: a reading assignment, objectives, and a guided study and assignment. Some lessons also include discussion sections focused on literary genres. Be sure to proceed through all the elements of each lesson. Complete the reading assignment and read the discussion content and prerequisite guided study material before responding to an assignment question or essay. To

help you plan out your progress throughout the course, complete the [Course Study Schedule](#) before you begin your first lesson.

Generally speaking, this course will be organized in the following way: you will read the work(s), you will read discussion and guided study content about the work(s), you will answer questions over the work(s) studied, and then for most of the assignments, you will write a short composition in answer to a topic. Your final exam will be a composition about three of the works we cover in this course. For each of the genres we study, I review the criteria by which you will analyze that type of literature. Your papers will be analyses of the works using one or more of the criteria. If any of the material about literary analysis is unfamiliar, you should consult a handbook or an anthology (or, perhaps easiest, go online) for more thorough explanations.

Assignments

If you read all the works carefully and use the online discussions and guided study material to understand them, you should have no difficulty with the course. I suggest that you first read the work for enjoyment. Then go back and reread or review using the discussion and guided study material to help you understand what you've read. You may want to do this second step chapter by chapter.

First read the assigned work for enjoyment.

You should take notes, and you should also mark your text so that later you can easily find passages that you may want to use in a composition or in the answers to questions for each assignment. Remember, you show your reader that you have carefully read by being specific in your answers. For the most part, quotations from the work best illustrate that understanding. Sometimes you may want to paraphrase (to save space perhaps, or to make your own assertions), but when you do paraphrase, be specific. Remember: when you are specific (preferably with many quotations), you illustrate to your reader that you have a thorough knowledge of the work based on a careful reading. You therefore give yourself credibility.

Be specific in your answers, and use quotations to illustrate your understanding.

I make several assumptions about your ability to write before you come to this class. The first is that you have taken two semesters of freshman English, in which you learned how to write a composition. I expect you to know the importance of a strong thesis statement; the need to develop your ideas logically and to organize your paper so that it reflects that logic; the need to provide your reader with transitions from paragraph to paragraph, and from idea to idea; and the importance of supporting your ideas with specific examples and illustrations. For a paper in which you write about literary works, many of those examples and illustrations will be in the form of quotations and paraphrases from the works that you're analyzing. These quotations and paraphrases should, of course, be documented; for this course, use the MLA form of documentation (a good, current handbook will have examples, or, again, it is easy to find information about MLA format online). I also expect college writing to show sophistication in sentence structure and vocabulary; I look for sentences that are varied in structure, and words that are precise and not hackneyed. If any of this information is unfamiliar to you, you should find a good handbook or go online and review such information as writing, sentence structure, parallelism, subordination and coordination, empty and hackneyed expressions, and the like.

For this course, use the MLA form of documentation.

As with all papers, you should consider the audience for whom you are writing. In this case, assume that your audience is well educated, and that he/she has read all the works. However, he/ she has not memorized the works. Therefore, you need not summarize the action, but you should be specific enough to remind your reader of the passage you are discussing.

Consider the audience for whom you are writing.

Your assignments are divided into parts. *Be sure to complete and submit all the parts of each assignment.* Note that **you may submit no more than two assignments per week for this course.**

Final Exam

Lesson 11 is the final exam for this course, and it will consist in a number of short essays. The final exam is open-book and is not timed, so it may be completed and submitted in the same manner as the other assignments for this course. Be aware that as with all the writing you do for this course, grammar, spelling, and composition will count, so proofread! **You must pass the final exam in order to pass the course.**

Grading Criteria

Your grade for the semester will be determined as follows:

Assignments 1-10 are 80 points each.
The final exam is worth a total of 200 points.
Total: 1000 points

Your semester letter grade will be based on the following point spreads:

A - 900-1000 points
B - 800-899 points
C - 700-799 points
D - 600-699 points
F - 599 and below

Please note that plus and minus grades are not used as final grades.

There is no pass/fail grading option.

NOTE: In order to pass the course, you must (1) submit all assignments and (2) pass the final exam by making at least 60 percent (120 points).

Faculty-Student Contact

I encourage you to contact me if you have any questions or concerns about the course. You are welcome to e-mail me by using the Mail tool in the navigation bar at left. (It is important to keep all mail related to this course contained within this TRACS site.) My policy is that during non-holiday breaks or announced away times, any email I receive between Monday morning and Friday at noon will receive a reply within 48 hours if possible. Emails received between Friday at noon and Sunday night will receive a reply on the next business day.

Free Tutoring Resources

A variety of free tutoring resources are available for students enrolled in correspondence courses. All correspondence students have access to several hours of free online tutoring from Smarthinking for subjects ranging from grammar and writing to mathematics and Spanish. Free online tutoring for writing-related assignments is also available from the Texas State Writing Center. For information on accessing these resources, please visit the Office of Distance and Extended Learning's [Free Tutoring](#) page. Currently-enrolled, degree-seeking students able to visit the Texas State campus are eligible for free in-person tutoring from the [Student Learning Assistance Center \(SLAC\)](#) on the fourth floor of Alkek Library and from the [Math Lab](#) in Derrick 233.

TRACS Technical Support

Texas State's Information Technology Assistance Center (ITAC) provides phone and LiveChat technical support for TRACS 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. To take advantage of these services, visit [ITAC online](#) or call 512.245.ITAC (4822). Note also that a number of online TRACS tutorials are available from [TRACS Facts](#).

Before beginning this online course, it is recommended that you review the minimum hardware and software requirements and other important information available on the ITS [Course Information page](#).

Correspondence Course Information

As a correspondence studies student, it is your responsibility to be familiar with correspondence-related policies and services. To this end, I encourage you to review the [Correspondence Course Information \(.pdf\)](#) page as well as the [Correspondence Studies Student Handbook](#).

Students with Special Needs

The Office of Distance and Extended Learning is committed to helping students with disabilities achieve their educational goals. A disability is not a barrier to correspondence study, and we strive to provide reasonable accommodations to individuals in coursework and test taking. Students who require special accommodations need to provide verification of their disability to the [Office of Disability Services](#), Suite 5-5.1 LBJ Student Center, 512.245.3451 (voice/TTY). Students should then notify the [Office of Distance and Extended Learning](#) of any disability-related accommodation needs as soon as possible to avoid a delay in accommodations.

Academic Integrity

The [Texas State Academic Honor Code](#) applies to all Texas State students, including correspondence students. The Honor Code serves as an affirmation that the University demands the highest standard of integrity in all actions related to the academic community.

Final Comments

I hope that you enjoy this course. After all, reading is one of the pleasures of life. If you can learn to read more carefully in this course, and learn how to evaluate what you read, I believe you should be pleased.

When you have finished the course, I hope you will have a renewed respect for literature, especially that written by the authors you will study.

Good luck!